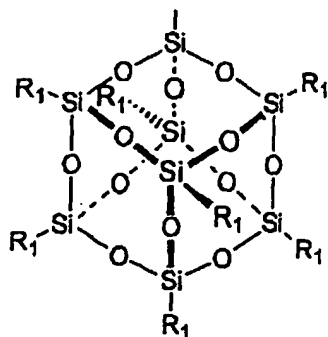


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

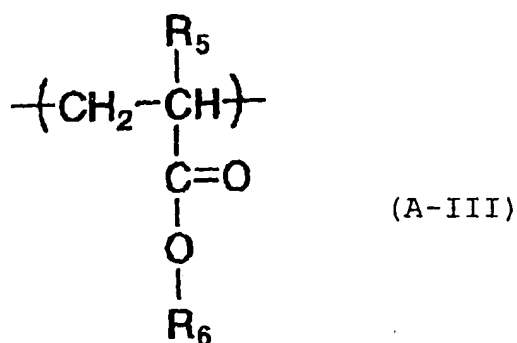
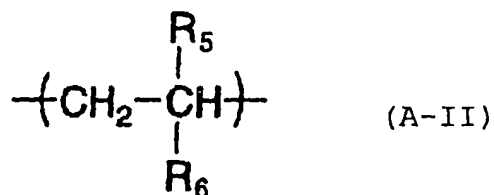
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): An intermediate layer material composition for a multilayer resist process, comprising (A) a polymer containing a repeating unit having on a side chain thereof a group represented by the following general formula (A-I) and at least one of a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-II) and a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-III):

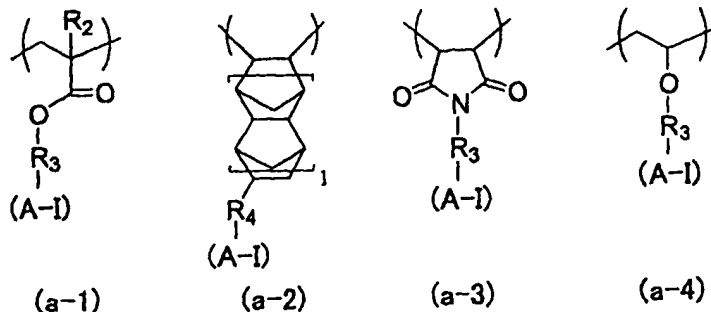


(A-I)



wherein R_1 represents an alkyl group, an alkoxyl group, an aryl group, an aralkyl group, a cyclopentyl group or a cyclohexyl group; a plurality of R_1 's each may be the same or different; R_5 represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R_6 represents an aryl group or an aralkyl group.

2. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, wherein the polymer is a polymer having at least one of repeating units represented by the following general formulas (a-1) to (a-4):



wherein (A-I) represents the group represented by the general formula (A-I) described in claim 1;
 R_2 represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R_3 represents an alkylene group or a phenylene group; R_4 represents an alkylene group, a phenylene group or $-C(=O)-O-R'$; R' represents an alkylene group.

3. (canceled).

4. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, wherein the polymer contains the repeating unit having on a side chain thereof the group represented by the following general formula (A-I) in an amount of 3 to 90 mol%.

5. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, which further comprises (B) a crosslinking agent.

6. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 5, wherein the crosslinking agent (B) is a phenol derivative having a molecular weight of 1,200 or less, containing 3 to 5 benzene rings in its molecule, and having 2 or more hydroxymethyl groups or

alkoxymethyl groups in total, wherein the hydroxymethyl groups or alkoxymethyl groups bind to the benzene rings.

7. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, which further comprises (C) a compound capable of generating an acid by heat.

8. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, which further comprises (D) a solvent.

9. (original): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1, which further comprises (E) a surfactant.

10. (original): A process for forming a resist pattern, which comprises:
forming on a substrate a lower resist layer comprising an organic material;
forming on the lower resist layer an intermediate layer using the intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1;
forming on the intermediate layer an upper resist layer comprising an organic material crosslinkable or decomposable by a radiation exposure;
forming a predetermined pattern on the upper resist layer; and
etching the intermediate layer, the lower resist layer and the substrate, sequentially.

11. (original): The process described in claim 10, wherein the intermediate layer is formed by coating the intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1 on the lower resist layer, and then baking the coating to be insolubilized in an organic solvent.

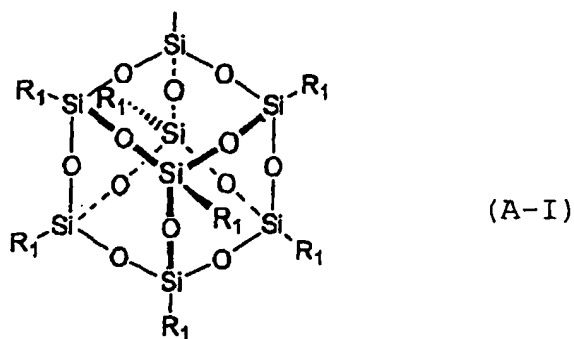
12. (currently amended): The process described in claim 11, wherein the coating is baked at a ~~temperature~~ temperature of 150 to 250°C.

13. (original): The process described in claim 10, wherein the lower resist layer has a thickness of 0.1 to 4.0 μm .

14. (original): The process described in claim 10, wherein the intermediate layer has a thickness of 0.02 to 0.6 μm .

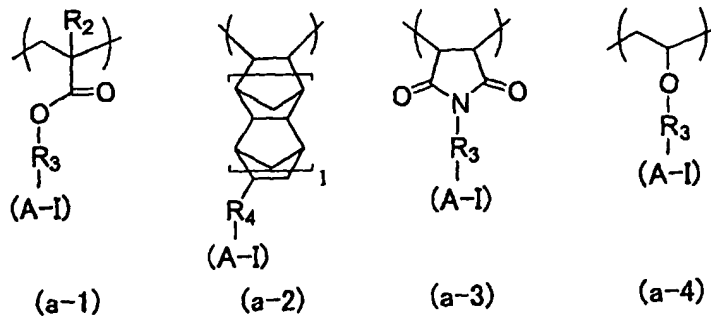
15. (original): The process described in claim 10, wherein the upper layer has a thickness of 0.03 to 0.6 μm .

16 (new): An intermediate layer material composition for a multilayer resist process, comprising (A) a polymer containing a repeating unit having on a side chain thereof a group represented by the following general formula (A-I) and (B) a crosslinking agent:



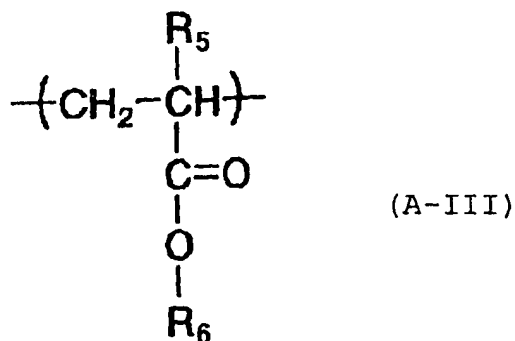
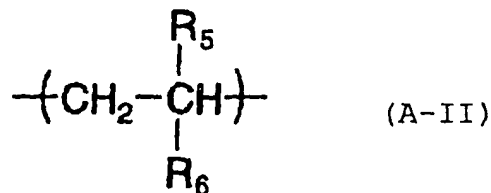
wherein R₁ represents an alkyl group, an alkoxyl group, an aryl group, an aralkyl group, a cyclopentyl group or a cyclohexyl group; a plurality of R₁'s each may be the same or different.

17 (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, wherein the polymer is a polymer having at least one of repeating units represented by the following general formulas (a-1) to (a-4):



wherein (A-I) represents the group represented by the general formula (A-I) described in claim 1; R_2 represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R_3 represents an alkylene group or a phenylene group; R_4 represents an alkylene group, a phenylene group or $-C(=O)-O-R'$; R' represents an alkylene group.

18 (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, wherein the polymer further contains at least one of a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-II) and a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-III):



wherein R₅ represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R₆ represents an aryl group or an aralkyl group having 20 or less carbon atoms.

19 (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, wherein the polymer contains the repeating unit having on a side chain thereof the group represented by the following general formula (A-I) in an amount of 3 to 90 mol%.

20. (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, wherein the crosslinking agent (B) is a phenol derivative having a molecular weight of 1,200 or less, containing 3 to 5 benzene rings in its molecule, and having 2 or more hydroxymethyl groups or alkoxymethyl groups in total, wherein the hydroxymethyl groups or alkoxymethyl groups bind to the benzene rings.

21 (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, which further comprises (C) a compound capable of generating an acid by heat.

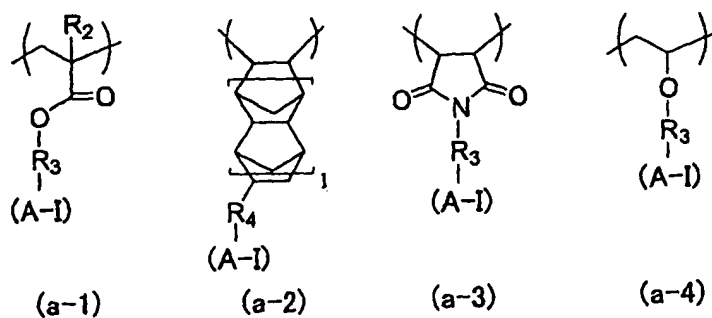
22 (new): The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, which further comprises (D) a solvent.

23. The intermediate layer material composition described in claim 16, which further comprises (E) a surfactant.

24 (new): A process for forming a resist pattern comprising:

- (a) forming on a substrate a lower resist layer,
- (b) forming on the lower resist layer an intermediate layer using the intermediate layer material composition described in claim 1; and
- (c) forming on the intermediate layer an upper resist layer.

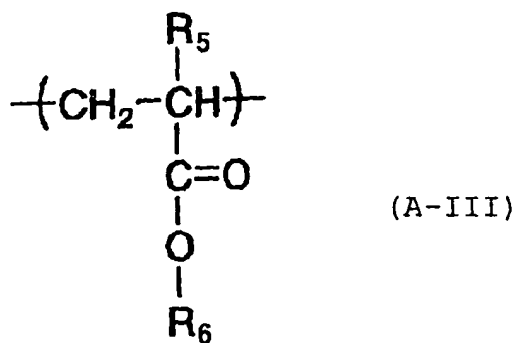
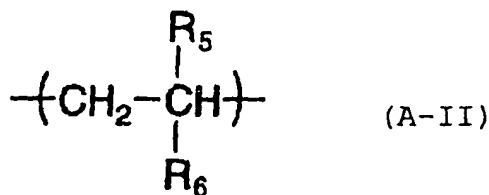
25 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, wherein the polymer is a polymer having at least one of repeating units represented by the following general formulas (a-1) to (a-4):



wherein (A-I) represents the group represented by the general formula (A-I) described in claim 1;
R₂ represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R₃ represents an alkylene group or a

phenylene group; R_4 represents an alkylene group, a phenylene group or $-C(=O)-O-R'$; R' represents an alkylene group.

26. (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, wherein the polymer further contains at least one of a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-II) and a repeating unit represented by the following general formula (A-III):



wherein R_5 represents a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; R_6 represents an aryl group or an aralkyl group.

27 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, wherein the polymer contains the repeating unit having on a side chain thereof the group represented by the following general formula (A-I) in an amount of 3 to 90 mol%.

28 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, which further comprises (B) a crosslinking agent.

29 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 28, wherein the crosslinking agent (B) is a phenol derivative having a molecular weight of 1,200 or less, containing 3 to 5 benzene rings in its molecule, and having 2 or more hydroxymethyl groups or alkoxymethyl groups in total, wherein the hydroxymethyl groups or alkoxymethyl groups bind to the benzene rings.

30 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, which further comprises (C) a compound capable of generating an acid by heat.

31 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, which further comprises (D) a solvent.

32 (new): The process for forming a resist pattern described in claim 24, which further comprises (E) a surfactant.